



Montgomery County Council

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Contact: Patrick Lacefield 240-777-7939 or Jean Arthur 240-777-7934

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**Statement by Council President Blair Ewing on County Executive's
Veto of Air Quality Legislation**

"I'm disappointed that the County Executive has decided to veto legislation to protect County residents' indoor air quality, especially those who live in townhouses and apartment buildings. Under his formulation, County residents would not be able to complain about excessive tobacco smoke from other people's homes that pose a health hazard to them and their families.

"It doesn't make sense to regulate indoor air pollutants and not address tobacco smoke at all.

"Even Mr. Duncan's own department director acknowledged tobacco smoke as an indoor pollutant, and second-hand smoke is recognized as a class A carcinogen. And, contrary to what the County Executive said, there was testimony at the public hearing on his provision to exempt tobacco smoke.

"That said, half a loaf is better than none. I'm confident that we'll back a revision of our clean air laws that includes other indoor air pollutants.

"The County Council has taken the lead on protecting the public health on smoking issues. We championed landmark legislation to ban smoking in workplaces in the County in the 1980's -- years before the state of Maryland followed suit.

"We passed the health regulation to ban restaurant smoking to protect restaurant workers and customers from second-hand smoke despite Mr. Duncan's veto. And we initiated the law that requires tobacco products to be placed behind store counters, out of reach of young people.

"And we'll continue our efforts to promote public health measures to benefit Montgomery's families." # # #